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WIDENING DEBATE

Efforts by officials in a number of states to establish school-based health clinics that offer pregnancy-prevention counseling among other services are continuing amid widening community controversy over their appropriateness.

See Page 4.

TOUGHER POLICY

The Chicago school board has adopted one of the nation's most stringent homework policies, mandating that all students be assigned daily homework—from 15 minutes a day for kindergartners to 150 minutes a day for high-school students.

See Page 4.

TIGHTER CONTROL

The U.S. Education Department has announced that it will closely monitor administrative expenditures, including salaries, in local Title VII bilingual-education programs and impose limits where it deems them appropriate.

See Page 10.

EDUCATION WEEK

American Education's Newspaper of Record | Volume V, Number 38 · June 11, 1986

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Black Leaders Hit Official's Talk on Values, Choice

By Tom Mirga

RACINE, WISC.—Undersecretary of Education Gary L. Bauer arrived here late last month on the final day of a national conference on the education of black Americans to deliver what his department billed as a "major" domestic-policy address.

Given the Reagan Administration's strained relations with most black advocacy groups, a cool reception might have been expected.

And that is exactly what Mr. Bauer received during the first half of his speech, which was devoted to a discussion of the need for the nation to return to the "traditional" values of hard work, strong families, and religiosity.

But when he stated that the Bill Cosby television series "and the values it promotes may ultimately be more important to black children's success than a bevy of new federal programs," the group began to grumble audibly.

Then, when his discussion turned to a defense of the Administration's proposal to de-

Continued on Page 13

Rights Post Candidate Withdraws Her Name

By Alina Tugend

WASHINGTON—Barbara Lerner, the Reagan Administration's nominee to head the Education Department's office for civil rights, has unexpectedly withdrawn her name from consideration for the post.

In letters to President Reagan and Secretary of Education William J. Bennett, dated May 27, Ms. Lerner, an education analyst, lawyer, and psychologist from New Jersey, said her "study of the problems of O.C.R. over the past several months convinced me that the kind of progress I hoped to make towards resolving them could not be made from that position."

Ms. Lerner said she was particularly concerned about the effects of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1984 ruling in *Grove City* v. *Bell* on the department's ability to enforce anti-discrimination laws.

In the *Grove City* case, the Court held that if a school practices illegal discrimination only in its physical-education department, for example, the government may

Continued on Page 15

FRED ZINNERMAN

The Education Department's initial findings from a new study of Chapter 1 aid could lead to tighter funding restrictions, some predict.

'Scientific Illiteracy' Found Widespread Among Adult Americans in New Study

By Robert Rothman

PHILADELPHIA—Americans with the least formal education generally do not understand—or hold wrong ideas about—basic scientific terms such as molecule, D.N.A., and radiation, according to a new federally funded study released at major science conference here.

But even a surprisingly high proportion of Americans with graduate degrees have similar difficulty explaining scientific terms, the study found.

Moreover, while education appears to reduce "scientific illiteracy," schools may have contributed to the problem, said Jon D. Miller, director of the Public Opinion Laboratory at Northern Illinois University and director of the study.

"In large part, these results point toward a precollegiate-education system that provides an inadequate conceptual framework for later inclusion of new information," he said.

Among its other findings, the study suggests that a substantial proportion of Americans believe astrology has a scientific basis, that some numbers are especially lucky for some people, and that unidentified flying objects are space vehicles from other civilizations.

"When viewed through the eyes of a citizen with little formal education, the world looks strange and somewhat hostile," Mr. Miller said.

"This group does not have a sense of controlling its own future and relies on luck, signs, and leaders to explain the events that occur in our world," he continued. "There is a strong sense of being the object or victim of the system."

Mr. Miller's study, released at the 152nd annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, was based on interviews with 2,000 adults nationwide last November and December.

Funded by the National Science Founda-

Continued on Page 14

U.S. Remedial Aid Misses Neediest, E.D. Study Finds

Says Many Chapter 1 Pupils Score Above the Average

By James Hertling

WASHINGTON—The $3.5-billion Chapter 1 remedial-education program serves many above-average students but fails to reach a significant number of the disadvantaged pupils it was intended to help, argues a new Education Department report on the biggest federal education effort.

Experts predicted last week that the finding could have significant policy consequences as the Congress considers revisions to Chapter 1 next year, when the law expires. Targeting the program's limited funds to the neediest pupils has long concerned lawmakers, and has already become an issue in the reauthorization debate.

More than 10 percent of students receiving Chapter 1 reading instruction scored above the 50th percentile on standardized tests, and nearly 20 percent of those receiving mathematics aid tested above the average, while a sizable proportion of lower-scoring pupils went unserved, the report says.

The report—the first of three from a Congressionally mandated, $6-million-plus assessment of Chapter 1—uses data from the "Sustaining Effects Study," a comprehensive 1983 examination of the program. Although the statistics are a decade old, recent trends indicate that they remain valid, according to the authors.

Continued on Page 13

Prayer Group Allowed To Meet Again

By Tom Mirga

The Pennsylvania school board whose policy barring a student religious club from meeting on school grounds raised issues debated before the U.S. Supreme Court this year has voted—apparently with some reluctance—to reverse its stand.

The Williamsport, Pa., school board's decision came two months after the High Court disposed of the student-club case on a technicality, in effect letting stand a federal district court's ruling striking down the board's policy. But the board members' decision not to contest the matter further leaves the constitutional questions raised by the case still unresolved for officials in school districts nationwide.

Reversing a vote taken in April, the board decided last month to let the nondenominational club known as Petros meet in Williamsport High School twice weekly during non-instructional periods before the start of the school day. The second vote was 4 to 1, with 4 abstentions.

The board's initial 5-to-3 vote against changing the policy "was mainly symbolic," according to Oscar W. Knade, superintendent of schools in Williamsport.

"They believe their principal charge is to maintain a sound education system that

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IN SUMMARY

Controversial Clinics
The question of whether school health clinics are an appropriate means of attacking the teen-pregnancy problem is dividing a growing number of communities nationwide. **Story on Page 4.**

Hitting the Books
Under a new districtwide, K-12 mandate that is among the most stringent of its kind, Chicago students are to be assigned a specified amount of homework every night. **Story on Page 4.**

In the Capitols
Illinois lawmakers have weakened the school-consolidation provisions of the state's education-reform package, but have upheld a controversial school-by-school "report card" plan. **Story on Page 8.**

Bilingual Limits
School districts receiving federal bilingual-education funds will face strict spending limits under a new policy, and the Senate has held hearings on a key bilingual-education bill. **Stories on Page 10.**

Oversight Shifted
To counter charges that its research efforts are too politicized, the Education Department has shifted oversight of the secretary's discretionary funds from its research office. **Story on Page 10.**

Student Aid Advances
The Senate has overwhelmingly approved a higher-education bill that rejects the President's proposed student-aid cuts but authorizes less money than the House version. **Story on Page 11.**

Vouchers Tabled
In the wake of a largely critical reception for its Chapter 1 voucher plan, the Education Department has decided to table the proposal and rethink its provisions. **Story on Page 11.**

Demography Report To Be Reprinted
Education Week plans to reprint "Here They Come, Ready or Not," a special report on demographic trends affecting the nation's schools. Orders for additional copies must be placed by June 15, so call us at (202) 466-5190 before that date to assure that we can fulfill your request. The cost of the reprint, including postage, will be: $2.00 each for 1 to 10 copies; $1.25 each for 11 to 25 copies; and $1.00 each for more than 26 copies. Please send check or money order to *Education Week*, Suite 775, 1255 23rd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

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THE WEEK

STATES

Cuomo Links Board To Dropout Problem

Gov. Mario M. Cuomo, who won the endorsement of New York Democrats last week for a second four-year term, has blamed the New York Board of Regents for a lack of improvements in the state's education system.

Despite a 42 percent increase in annual education spending since 1982, Mr. Cuomo complained, the problem of school dropouts remains a serious one. "We have to bring the dropout rate down," the Governor said in a speech accepting his party's nomination.

Earlier, Mr. Cuomo told *The New York Times:* "I'm not happy with the board of regents at all, and we're going to talk about it and do something about changing the way they operate."

The Governor is considering possible steps to make the regents more accountable, according to Cornelius J. Foley, his education aide. Mr. Foley declined to be more specific.

A spokesman for the 16-member board was unavailable for comment.

"The Governor has been misinformed," responded Martin C. Barell, who was recently elected chancellor of the 16-member board of regents. "The test results have gone up and the dropout rates have gone down."

"We have a difficult problem in New York City," he added. "I'd like to say something dramatic is going to happen tomorrow, but it isn't."

The regents, elected to seven-year terms by the legislature, are considered among the most powerful state boards in the nation.

Oregon Tax Issue To Be on Ballot

The Oregon Education Association is claiming success in its petition drive to place a state sales-tax initiative on the November ballot.

The state's voters have rejected such a tax seven times in the past 52 years—most recently by a more than 3-to-1 margin last September.

Supporters, however, think they can win voters over this year by linking the proposed 5 percent sales tax with an attractive property-tax-relief package for homeowners and businesses. The initiative would set aside 30 percent of all sales-tax revenues to fund reduced property taxes; the remaining 70 percent would be earmarked for education.

A three-month-long petition drive by O.E.A. members gathered 107,860 signatures in support of the initiative, according to Sandy Ellis, president of the association. The petitions must now be validated by Oregon's secretary of state, a process that may take several months.

According to Ms. Ellis, the O.E.A.'s latest poll showed 45 percent of those surveyed supporting the initiative, up from 38 percent last November. Gov. Victor G. Atiyeh, a prime mover of last year's sales-tax measure, has not yet taken a stand on O.E.A.'s initiative. This year, the Governor is pushing his own education-funding referendum, which does not include a sales tax.

Degrees Differ As Curricula Vary, State Study Finds

Without a uniform statewide curriculum, a Massachusetts high-school diploma "lacks any singular meaning," according to a study by the state department of education.

"The degree differs from community to community," said Terry Zoulas, a department spokesman.

The study, which examined transcripts of a random sample of 3,000 seniors who graduated in 1984, did not suggest possible reforms, but analyzed the content of high-school education in the state so that the state board could consider policy revisions, Mr. Zoulas added.

While a previous study found that Massachusetts students take more academic courses than the national average, the new study found that the course content varies widely.

In addition, sex, race, and class often determine which courses a student takes, the study concluded. For example, a white female in an industrial suburb was much less likely to take academic courses than a male in a middle-class community, Mr. Zoulas noted.

DISTRICTS

More Allegations And a Resignation In Detroit District

The president of the Detroit Board of Education, facing allegations that he took payoffs from a school-milk contractor, last week stepped down as board president.

The president, Harold Murdock, will continue to serve as a board member.

Mr. Murdock and Ferd Hall, director of the school's Equal Employment Opportunies and Contract Relations Department, are being investigated by the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office. The prosecutor is looking into accusations that Mr. Murdock and Mr. Hall took bribes from a school-milk supplier in exchange for awarding the supplier part of the Detroit schools' milk contract.

Mr. Murdock has denied any involvement in the payoffs, and Mr. Hall, who has been suspended with pay pending outcome of the investigation, has made no comment.

Last February, the school board cancelled its $2-million contract with one milk supplier, Jo-Dan Limited, and awarded part of that contract, at a higher cost, to Metro Institutional Food Services.

A tape recording, made public May 14, appears to contain conversations among Mr. Murdock, Mr. Hall, and the president of Metro about payoffs linked to the milk contract.

Last week's development was the latest in the series of controversies involving the Detroit board. It has also been accused of overspending on travel and chauffeurs amid budget austerity for school programs.

Panel Critical of Supply Shortage In New York

New York City schools face a "chronic shortage of supplies" because of inadequate expenditures by the city and mismanagement by the board of education, according to a citizens' watchdog group.

A study released last week by the Educational Priorities Panel found that teachers and principals are often forced to purchase materials with their own money because of the inefficiency of the board's bureau of supplies. It also documented wasteful practices, such as spending 30 percent to 40 percent above the retail price for computer software.

These problems are "seriously undermining staff and student morale," the panel said.

Robert Terte, a spokesman for the board of education, said the citizens' group "is right on target when they indicate that one of the basic problems is a lack of sufficient funds to purchase needed supplies." In many schools, he added, "there's a depression mentality of hoarding materials because they've been starved for all these years."

The panel recommended increasing the schools' $34-million allocation for supplies by $5 million next year. The city council is now working on a fiscal 1987 budget, with final decisions expected by mid-June.

Oil Price Drop Forces Closing of Innovative School

An alternative high school in Oklahoma City was forced to close its doors late last month despite its students' high test scores and its wide community acceptance.

The school was a victim of the effects of falling oil prices on the budget of the city school district, which sponsored the program.

The Cleveland Innovative School opened 11 years ago for students who wanted rigorous academic courses without the formality of a

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The Academic Preparation Series, developed by the College Board's Educational EQuality Project, offers high school teachers innovative suggestions on how to help students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to perform successfully in college. The series was created *by* teachers *for* teachers; it is directed toward bringing curricular and instructional concerns to the center of the education-reform movement. The six books in the Academic Preparation Series are designed as standard references to help teachers work with *all* students in the everyday classroom.

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- **Academic Preparation in Foreign Language** stresses the proficiency approach to language learning so that students will actually be able to use the language they are studying.

Because of their comprehensive nature, these books should be of interest to curriculum specialists and superintendents—as well as actual classroom teachers. They may be ordered as a complete set or as individual titles.

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Study Highlights Trends In Computer Utilization

By William Snider

More elementary students use computers than do high-school students, but for fewer hours each week, according to the most comprehensive analysis to date of the time students spend with computers in school.

In his study, "The Second National Survey of Instructional Uses of School Computers," the project's director, Henry Jay Becker of the Center for Social Organization of Schools at The Johns Hopkins University, found that computer-usage patterns varied dramatically from the elementary to secondary levels, with middle schools exhibiting characteristics of both levels.

The study, which analyzed data collected in spring 1985 from a nationally representative sample of more than 2,000 schools, also found that three-quarters of the schools that had not been using computers in 1983 at the time of the first survey had begun to do so.

During that two-year period, schools began ordering computers in larger quantities than in the past, and the total number of computers used in schools quadrupled, from 250,000 to more than 1 million, the study found.

Substantial Experience for Some

A total of approximately 15 million students and 500,000 teachers used computers in instructional programs during the 1984-85 school year, according to the study.

In schools with computers, 30 percent of the elementary students and 21 percent of high-school students used them in an average week.

At the elementary level, the median computer-using student spends slightly more than 30 minutes a week using a computer, most often for drill and practice in mathematics and language arts, according to the study.

But the median high-school computer user spends nearly two hours a week with the machines, more often than not in computer-literacy and programming courses.

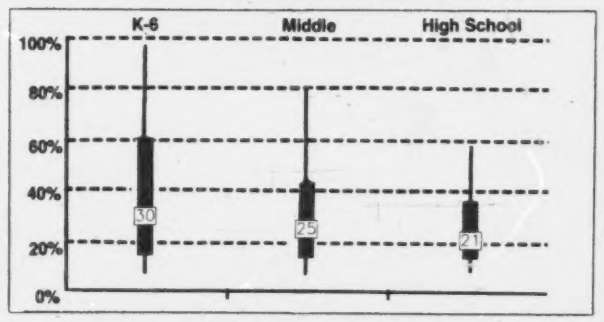
The study notes that "by limiting the number of students who use school computers, many schools do provide substantial experience to at least some of their students."

The study also found that:

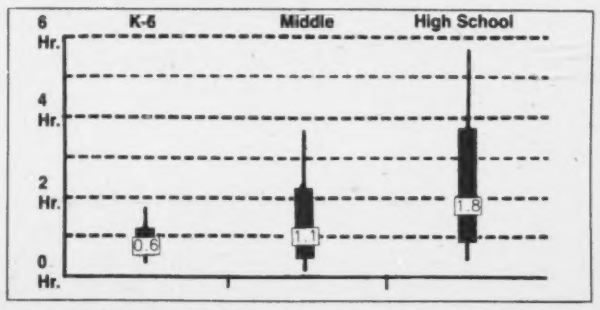
- About 27 percent of computer-using high-school teachers were viewed as expert at various computer uses, compared with 21 percent of middle-school and 10 percent of elementary computer-using teachers.
- The most active computer-using students at each school level take more than one-third of all student computer time, while the most active 25 percent get roughly three-fifths of all computer time.
- Between 1983 and 1985, the proportion of elementary schools with five or more computers jumped from 7 percent to 54 percent, while the proportion of secondary schools with 15 or more computers rose from 10 percent to 56 percent.
- Computers placed in laboratories are used roughly five more hours per week than those placed in classrooms or libraries.

The results of the study will be published in six newsletters over the coming months. A subscription to the series is available for $7.50 by writing to: Computer Survey Newsletters, Center for Social Organization of Schools, The Johns Hopkins University, 3505 North Charles St., Baltimore, Md. 21218.

Percent of Enrollment Using Computers (avg. week)



Hours of Computer Use Per Student User (per week)



Diagrams above illustrate range of variation in computer use. Numbers in open squares are the median for each group. Rectangles represent schools between the 25th and 75th percentiles. Lines represent schools between the 10th and 90th percentiles.

SOURCE: THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY